

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 27-29, 33-37, 41, 42, 45, 47-50, 52-63, 67, 70-73, 75-78 and 81 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein.

Please amend Claims 24, 25, 26, 30-32, 38-40, 43, 44, 46, 51, 64-66, 74, 79, and 80 as follows.

1. - 23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) An accounting method comprising:

a step of inputting money information; ~~indicating an amount of money recorded on a recording medium;~~

a step of inputting price information attached to electronic content information provided by an information provider terminal;

a step of judging a use permission of the electronic content information in accordance with the money information and the price information; ~~and input in said input step and outputting a permission signal for permitting a use of electronic information provided by an information provider; and~~

a step of processing the electronic content information so as to enable use of the electronic content information provided by the information provider in accordance with the result of judging. ~~permission signal;~~

~~wherein said processing step is not performed if the permission signal is not output in said judging step.~~

25. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 24, wherein the electronic content information to be provided is enciphered.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 25, wherein said step of processing comprises a process of decoding the enciphered electronic content information.

27.- 29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[28]] 24, wherein said money information is cash.

31. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[28]] 24, wherein said money information is recorded in a recording medium.

32. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim [[28]] 24, further comprising ~~communication means for a step of~~ transmitting use information of the provided electronic content information.

33. - 37. (Cancelled)

38. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~[[37]]~~ 32, further comprising a ~~charge distributor~~ step of transmitting charge distribution information to said information provider terminal in accordance with the use information.

39. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~[[37]]~~ 32, further comprising a ~~charge accommodating~~ step of performing accommodation of a use charge of the provided electronic content information in accordance with the use information.

40. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~[[33]]~~ 24, wherein cipher communication is performed ~~between said terminals~~ with said information provider terminal.

41.-42. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~[[41]]~~ 24, wherein ~~said first data~~ the money information includes data indicating a type of a recording medium in which ~~said first data~~ the money information is recorded, and said judging step judges ~~[[a]]~~ the use permission of the electronic content information in accordance with the data indicating the type.

44. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim ~~[[41]]~~ 24, further comprising a step of rewriting the amount of money in response to a ~~judgment operation of said judging step~~ the result of judging.

45. (Cancelled)

46. (Currently Amended) A program storage medium readable by a computer, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer to perform an accounting method, said method comprising the steps of:

inputting money information; ~~indicating an amount of money recorded on a recording medium;~~

inputting price information attached to electronic content information provided by an information provider terminal;

judging a use permission of the electronic content information in accordance with the money information and the price information; ~~and inputted in said input step and outputting a permission signal for permitting a use of electronic information provided by an information provider; and~~

processing the electronic content information so as to enable use of the electronic content information ~~provided by the information provider~~ in accordance with the result of judging. ~~permission signal;~~

~~wherein said processing step is not performed if the permission signal is not output in said judging step.~~

47.-50. (Cancelled)

51. (Currently Amended) ~~A transaction system comprising:~~
~~a provider which provides electronic information with a price data of the electronic~~
~~information;~~
~~a device which obtains money data recorded on a recording medium and the electronic~~
~~information with the price data, in which the money data is compared with the price data to judge~~
~~if the money amount is enough for use of the electronic information, wherein the device rewrites~~
~~the money data based on a use of the electronic information and outputs the price corresponding~~
~~to the use of the electronic information, and performs processing of the electronic information so~~
~~as to enable use of the electronic information provided by the information provider in accordance~~
~~with the judging; and~~
~~an administrative terminal which sums up the price outputted from the terminal device for~~
~~each information and notifies results of summing up for each information respectively to the~~
~~information provider which provides the information;~~
~~wherein said device does not receive the electronic information when said device judges~~
~~that the money amount is not enough for use of the electronic information~~ A method according to
claim 24, further comprising a step of outputting the price information;
a step of summing up the output price information for each item of electronic content
information; and
a step of notifying results of summing up for each item of electronic content information
respectively to the information provider terminal.

52.-63. (Cancelled)

64. (Currently Amended) An accounting apparatus comprising:
means for inputting money information ~~indicating an amount of money recorded on a~~
~~recording medium;~~
means for inputting price information attached to electronic content information provided
by an information provider terminal;
means for judging a use permission of the electronic content information in accordance
with the money information and the price information ~~input from said input means out outputting~~
~~a permission signal for permitting a use of electronic information provided by an information~~
~~provider; and~~
means for processing the electronic content information so as to enable use of the
electronic content information ~~provided by the information provider~~ in accordance with the result
of judging. permission signal;
~~wherein said processing means does not receive the electronic information if the~~
~~permission signal is not output by said judging means.~~

65. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 64, wherein the electronic
content information to be provided is enciphered.

66. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 65, wherein the process
comprises a process of decoding the enciphered electronic content information.

67. (Cancelled)

68. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 64, wherein the money information is cash.

69. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 64, wherein the money information is recorded in a recording medium.

70.-73. (Cancelled)

74. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim [[70]] 64, further comprising ~~communication~~ means for performing a step of transmitting use information of the provided electronic content information.

75.-78. (Cancelled)

79. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim [[75]] 64, wherein the ~~first data~~ money information includes data indicating a type of a recording medium in which the ~~first data~~ money information is recorded, and said judging means judges [[a]] the use permission of the electronic content information in accordance with the data indicating the type.

80. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim [[75]] 64, further comprising means for rewriting the amount of money in response to ~~a judgment operation of said judging~~ means the result of judging.

81. (Cancelled)